



REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
President

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REMARKS

of the President of the Republic of Macedonia,
H.E. Mr. Branko Crvenkovski
at the Regional Forum, "Cultural Corridors in South East Europe"



Varna, May 20-21 2005

Distinguished Mr. President,
Distinguished Director General of UNESCO,
Distinguished Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
Distinguished presidents and representatives of the SEE countries,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor and pleasure to address this eminent gathering on behalf of the Republic of Macedonia and extend my sincerest greetings and wishes for success of this Regional Forum.

We especially welcome the interest and support of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission in encouraging our countries to maintain forums of this kind, which I am convinced, will contribute to the stabilization, peace and development of South East Europe.

These initiatives introduce a new quality and dimension to the regional cooperation which was demonstrated also by the Forum "Dialogue Among Civilizations", held in Ohrid, in August, 2003, the Conference of the Ministers of Culture on the occasion of the inauguration of the Mostar Bridge in July 2004, the Regional Summit "Development of Inter-ethnic and Inter-religious Dialogue" in Tirana, December 2004, the recent establishment of the SEE Council of Ministers of Culture as well as the signing of the Copenhagen Status and certainly the organization of this forum in Varna.

The realization of these visits at the highest level, has accelerated the process of reconciliation and strengthening of peace and stability in the SEE region and launched the dialogue on mutual understanding, tolerance and respect of cultural and religious diversity between and among civilizations.

In order to emphasize the importance of all the meetings so far and their follow up, I consider that they should be mentioned in addition to the Annex A, also in the Declaration of the Forum itself, after the first paragraph, as a preamble.

I believe that in the course of these two days of the Forum, through a joint exchange of experience and through our remarks, we will manage to define the priorities and joint needs.

I consider that it is the culture and the cultural heritage with all its diversity and similarities in this region that widen the prospective of our region.

The future partnership is a clear strategic imperative of the cultural development of the region.

I believe that emphasizing the spirit of regional cooperation by creating an expert network and longterm strategic program in all areas of culture will eliminate all restraining definitions and will promote intercultural processes and sustainable development of the whole region.

The Republic of Macedonia in the framework of UNESCO and the Council of Europe is doing its utmost to promote cooperation with countries member of the South East Europe by actively involving in their programs and initiatives.

The Republic of Macedonia is a country with rich history and cultural tradition. My country always offers a hand of friendship and cooperation to its neighbors, to Europe and to all the countries in the world, by consistently following the idea of the EU and UNESCO to build a world with less possible limitations in which the Republic of Macedonia has been giving and will continue to give its utmost contribution.

Thank you.